



The Phoenix Family Readiness Group Newsletter

1st Special Troops Battalion, 4th Infantry Division (M)



1st Edition, Issue 3 ~ 2 August – 1 September 2005

Families, friends and fellow soldiers of the Phoenix Battalion:

Thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter. In this issue we will meet the FRG leaders, look at some notes from the company commanders and the Battalion Operations Officer Major Patton, and finally, take a look at holidays and leave opportunities.



Back, left to right: Beth, Amanda, Jessica. Front, left to right: Deanne, Doreen.

The Battalion's Family Readiness Group is growing rapidly. We have been blessed with five amazing women who selflessly volunteer their time to increase the units readiness and support Rear Detachment Operations. The FRG leaders have all submitted a few thoughts to introduce themselves and help the battalion get to know them.

BATTALION

Hi, my name is Beth and I am the Battalion FRG leader. I am originally from Mississippi and I have a husband and two children. My boys are David (10) and Matthew (5). My family and I have recently

moved to Fort Hood from Germany. This is our 4th time to be stationed at Fort Hood and we are glad to be back. I am a college professor and currently teach business classes for Tarleton State University. I like to read, cook and travel. The boys keep me busy with their activities and I am looking forward to some fun FRG activities. I hope to get to know everyone better in the coming months. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions you may have. My email is texasraindance@yahoo.com.

Beth

HHD

Hello everyone, my name is Jessica. I have been with HHD for 2 years. I was elected the FRG leader 3 months ago. I have a 17 month old son named Isreal. My husband is a PFC in the S3 shop at BDE, we have been married for 2 years. I am originally from Cleveland, Ohio. Feel free to contact me with any questions. My email is mrsjrollins@yahoo.com. Thanks,

Jessica

HHC

My name is Doreen and I'm the FRG Leader for HHC 1STB. I was born in Puerto Rico and raised in Florida. My husband is the HHC Supply Sergeant. We've been married for 13 yrs. and have two kids. Our daughter Ashley is 9 yrs. old and our son Justin is 7 yrs. old.

Thanks,

Doreen

A CO

Hello everyone, I'm Amanda. I have been with Alpha Company for the past 3 years and the FRG leader for the past 2. I am from Carrollton, TX around the Dallas area. I am the Assistant Manager at Sears Portrait Studio and a student teacher at Central Texas College in the photography program. If you have any questions or suggestions about meeting locations or things that you would like to discuss, feel free to call me at 554-3505.

Amanda

B CO

My name is Deanne, I am the FRG leader for Bravo Co. My husband is company XO. We are from Texas but have traveled many places with the Army. We have 2 children, ages 11yrs old and 22 months old. We look forward to getting to know you all.

Thanks, Deanne

Now that we all know the FRG leaders make sure you come out to the next meeting. Contact your FRG leader for details, if you do not have contact information for your FRG leader call the Battalion Staff Duty at (254) 288-3111 and ask for Captain Miller.

Don't forget to come out to the Battalion FRG meeting on the 24th of September from 14-1700 at the Iron Horse Readiness Center. It will be an opportunity to meet new people, make welcome home signs and share time with friends.



NOTES FROM THE COMPANY COMMANDERS

HHD

HHD had a great FRG meeting on August 9th. We gave information to the spouses about the NTC deployment and the Iraq deployment. The next company FRG meeting is scheduled for September 13th. Mrs. Jessica Rollins, the FRG leader, got a lot of volunteers to help with the company FRG. HHD has stayed busy all month getting ready for NTC, spending most of the month in the field perfecting command post operations. We're looking forward to leaving for NTC almost as much as we're looking forward to getting back!

HHC

HHC continues to march along on our path to NTC. The soldiers are putting forth tremendous efforts to complete every mission they are assigned. The NCO's leadership is tested daily and their resolve to accomplish whatever is set before them is a true sign of their professionalism. Currently the company is loading our vehicles and equipment in preparation for shipment to NTC, conducting Humvee upgrades and exchange, and predeployment briefings.

As part of the deployment to NTC, the Soldiers in HHC are loading up all the equipment they will need to use while deployed to NTC. This entails conducting precombat checks and inspections on all vehicles and equipment, laying out their personal TA-50, and loading shipping containers. Prior to shipping out the containers and equipment, the containers and vehicles must once again be inspected by DA civilians who will certify that the equipment is safe for shipment.

Currently, the company is conducting an exchange/upgrade of six Humvees for up-armored versions of the same vehicle. The process involves removing all the radio equipment currently installed in the vehicle and then having it reinstalled in new vehicles. The process is tedious and time consuming, but the end result will provide HHC will better protection for the soldiers riding in the vehicles.

This month has been a month of personnel turbulence for the company. 1SG Pedraza is coming to the company following a stint as an ROTC instructor at Northern Illinois University. 1SG Pedraza is a welcome addition to the team, and he has wasted no time in settling in and making his presence known. The company also welcomes many more NCOs and soldiers across the ranks. It is an exciting time to be in the company and the soldiers feel it everyday.

The company will deploy to NTC from the 26th of August through the 2nd of September. NTC will be a great opportunity for the company to exercise its new leadership and train all our soldiers on our battle tasks prior to deployment to NTC. The NTC rotation will last until the end of September and all soldiers should return from NTC no later than the first week of October. Yes, the company has been busy and will maintain a busy schedule for some time to come. But the perseverance and personal dedication of the soldiers to meet their missions today ensures our future success on the battlefields of tomorrow. And to that end, the soldiers of HHC will continue their march with their heads held high and their sights set on our next mission.

A CO

Greetings to the friends and family of the Nighthawks and the Phoenix Battalion. I am CPT Clay Bell, the new commander of Alpha Company, 1st STB. I assumed this position from CPT Andy Gilman on 9 August 2005. As the former S2 for 1-22 Infantry, I had the privilege of working with several Nighthawks during July's Task Force Lanes. They performed remarkably well, and I know our soldiers will continue to give nothing but their best. It is truly an honor to be given this opportunity to command, and I look forward to meeting with you in the near future.



A Co soldiers standing tall at the Change of Command.

As the Brigade's NTC Rotation rapidly approaches, the company is hard at work preparing for the deployment. Thank you all for your patience during the past and future long nights and weekends. The training and preparation we do now will better prepare us for our future deployment to Iraq, where your loved ones will serve at the tip of America's spear.

There have been several new leadership additions and a few changes to the company's structure in recent weeks. 1LT Clayton Finch is the new Platoon Leader for the MSG Platoon. He formerly served as the Tactical Intelligence Officer for 1-66 Armor. CW1 Thomas Hofmann is now serving as the Operational Management Team Chief and supervising our HUMINT

Collection Teams. Mr. Hofmann is a former 98G Staff Sergeant specializing in Spanish. The TUAV platoon still remains OPCON to the Division's Aviation Brigade, where they continue to train on the RQ-7B Shadow, the latest version of our unmanned aerial vehicle. Our CGS section has received the Trojan Spirit-LITE system. This state of the art platform will give the Brigade better situational awareness of the battlefield, as well as give us access to previously unavailable intelligence sources.



LTC Cross passes the colors to the new A Co Commander, CPT Bell.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge all of you, our families and friends. Without your support, we would be unable to give our best. I am proud to command a company of such fine men and women, and I look forward to our future accomplishments. We will write the history books as the first Alpha Company to serve in combat under the colors of the Phoenix Battalion. Thank you for your continued support, and if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at (254) 288-3615.

B CO

Bravo Company completed JNN validation! There is still a lot to learn, but NTC should be the perfect opportunity. The company ran a successful range and is now 100% on weapons qualifications. Good job SFC Gonzalez and SSG Newton.

Congratulations SPC Mueller, SPC Bell, SPC Stevens, and SPC Kelley on your success at the Sergeant Promotion board. New promotions include PFC Faulkner, PFC Bray, PFC Blakely, SPC Carrier and SPC Griffin. Also welcome PVT Hickey and SPC Thompson.

Thanks for the support of our families. If you need anything please call the orderly room at 553-1692. You may also call the FRG leader, Deanne Simpson at 698-4820.

NOTES FROM MAJ PATTON

This battalion has worked hard over the last month to deploy the battalion to Fort Irwin for our Mission Readiness Exercised (MRX). We also successfully completed Bravo Company's fielding of their new communications equipment. As part of this fielding, the Brigade conducted a command post exercise and validated all command and control systems. The battalion continues to lead the brigade as an integral part of all operations. At NTC your soldiers will receive the best training in the world in order to prepare for Iraq. When we return from NTC, we will focus our efforts for deployment. During the pre-deployment briefs in August LTC Cross reviewed our calendar for October, November, and December. A review of this information follows.

Return from NTC 1-5 OCT. We will arrive to Ft Hood from NTC over a 5 day period. Soldiers will be able to return after their vehicles are either shipped to Ft Hood or has been turned back in at NTC. The rear detachment will have information on soldier's return and will put out information using the FRG and the rear detachment chain of command.

NTC After Operations Maintenance 6-14 OCT. The BN will conduct a thorough and disciplined AOM upon our return from NTC. This will facilitate the deployment of equipment to Iraq and facilitate opportunity leave periods by ensuring the majority of our equipment is serviceable when we return from NTC.

Columbus Day/Raider Olympics 10 October. This is a planned sports day for the Brigade beginning with a Brigade Run and followed by team sports using battalion level teams. Families can participate and attend the events as well – 10 October is a KISD day off from school. Following the Run, units will move to a designated location to begin sports competitions and an outdoor picnic. Volunteers will also be recognized at this event for contributions to the division and Fort Hood.

Pre-Deployment Briefs 12 OCT. This is your opportunity to get direct information on your soldier's deployment from the chain of command. We will conduct a briefing at 1000-1200 and at 1830-2030 in the Phantom Warrior Center. The briefings are designed for you, but your soldier is also welcome. Child care is available for those who would like to use it. We are looking for other dates to give briefings. If you have a preference on a day for a deployment brief, please contact your FRG leader's with a recommendation!

Range Week 17- 21 OCT. We will build on the success we experienced at weapons ranges in July by conducting another round of weapons qualification in October. Prior to deployment every deploying soldier will qualify on his or her assigned weapon. Qualified soldiers will continue to go to ranges and train on reflexive fire and maintain their proficiency.

This will ensure that all soldiers in the battalion are prepared for the deployment.

Individual Training 17 OCT- 10 NOV. Post NTC individual training will focus on the directed pre-deployment training requirements. The battalion will conduct this training, with each company having areas of responsibility. Additionally, the brigade will establish a brigade level training plan run by Rear Detachment personnel to augment our training plan. We will complete this training by 10 November.

Rail to Port Operations 28 OCT- 6 NOV. We will begin to transport containers and vehicles to our scheduled port for shipment to Iraq. The process and requirements from your soldiers will be similar to what was required in order to go to NTC.



Above: A soldier ground guides a vehicle at the DRFF.

Deployment Window 28 NOV- 9 DEC. We are scheduled to deploy during this timeframe and begin operations in Kuwait. From there we will move into Iraq and occupy our area of operations.

Training Holidays. There are several scheduled training holidays over the next three months. These are subject to change

	OCTOBER					
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
						Redeployment
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			Redeployment			
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Redeployment	Raider Olympics		OIF Predeployment Briefs			
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
			Leave Window			
						TRNG Holiday
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
			Leave Window			
						TRNG Holiday
30	31					
	Leave Window					

	NOVEMBER					
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
						TRNG Holiday
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	TRNG Holiday		Leave Window			
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
			Leave Window			
					TRNG Holiday	
27	28	29	30			
Leave Window						

based on the Division calendar and deployment requirements.

21 and 28 October. These are scheduled three day weekends.

Veteren's Day Weekend 11 NOV. This is currently scheduled as a four day weekend.

Thanksgiving Weekend 24 NOV. This is currently scheduled as a four day weekend.

Leave Windows 17-31 OCT and 14-28 NOV. There are two leave windows scheduled prior to deployment. Companies will not have more than 50% assigned on leave at one time. If leave interferes with a soldier's individual readiness, soldier readiness comes first. No leave has been approved as of this letter!

Finally, your soldiers are doing a great job as they prepare and train for our deployment! I know we will have a safe and productive training rotation at NTC.

Phoenix!

MAJ Thomas "Dave" Patton
Battalion Operations Officer

PHOENIX 6

As we head out to the National Training Center, I would like to thank all of the Soldiers and Families for their hard work packing, preparing and rail loading equipment. The movement was a great success because of the great team effort of the battalion and drive of the soldiers. I would also like to thank all of you for your attendance during the deployment briefs. I think we were able to paint a clear picture on what is in store for the next 5 months and several windows of opportunity for leave before we deploy to Iraq. We will have



NTC or Bust!!! Last minute repairs at the DRFF

another series of predeployment briefs in October to discuss in more detail the deployment. Please try and attend one of these as we will be discussing pay and benefits, how to contact someone when you need help, the casualty notification process, deployment dates, mid tour leave and many other items. Thanks again for the hard work from the solders and I look forward to seeing all of the families again after our National Training Center Deployment!

LTC John W. Cross
Phoenix 6

To Dare Is To Do

Larry A. Seaman
Command Sergeant Major
U.S. Army

John W. Cross
LTC, EN
Commanding

Next Issue: Published from the National Training Center.